



The Outlook

First Baptist Church Clayton

Show • Tell
Grow • Serve

December 21, 2025

Volume 48 Number 48

MERRY CHRISTMAS

**Jesus arrived to be with us;
He is with us now!**

By Dr. Len Keever
Pastor

Since Thanksgiving, I have been with four as they have passed from this life to the other, I've also attended the service of a friend who passed in Dunn.



Each person was different; each one having lived a faithful life. Each was loved by family and friends. There was only one constant

between them. It was not gender or age, profession or status. What was constant

was faith, they all believed in Jesus, they all hoped for eternal life.

I doubt any of them had the same vision of what heaven will be like – as Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 13:12, “For now we see as if looking into a smudged mirror” – but they trusted in the same name, Jesus!

All five had asked Jesus to come live in their hearts. All five spent the rest of their lives discovering what that means. One became a teacher, another sang and organized, one was creative and built memories, another spoke words of encouragement, all were gifted by the Holy Spirit.

See He is with us now! page 3

The Outlook will not be published December 28 and January 4



Candlelight Christmas Eve Service

5:00 p.m.

Wednesday, December 24

**We hope you will join us for a
Candlelight Christmas Eve Service
on Wednesday, December 24 at 5 p.m.**

We will participate in the Lord's Supper as we celebrate our Lord's birth!

Dear First Baptist Church,

Thank you so much for wrapping your arms around our family during Judy's celebration of life and throughout the many years of this journey. This church meant so much to her and has been our rock. We are deeply grateful for the beautiful celebration of life through reflection and music.

Many thanks to the church staff, the current choir and former choir members who came back to sing, the Lunch Committee, the Bereavement Committee, the Homebound Ministry Team, Hope Sunday School Class and so many others who helped in so many ways. Your support always came at just the right time. Please continue to keep us in your prayers.

– Jimmy Cox, Jill Jenkins, Jason Cox and Jon Cox

thank you 

Ministry team seeks to improve communication

Communication is an essential extension of ministry within the church. The Church Council is currently gauging interest in a potential new team ministry opportunity to help us effectively communicate First Baptist Church Clayton committee activities, upcoming church events and service opportunities. If established, the Communication Ministry Team will also work to improve communication with church members and others via online videos, online slides prior to worship services, and scrolling messages on TV monitors around the church.

This new ministry will seek to expand and improve communication efforts that began a few years ago when the Outlook returned as a weekly newsletter, a social media presence was established, directional signage was provided inside the church and steps were made to educate church members on the capabilities of Realm.

If this interests you and you want to serve your church and help grow God's Kingdom, please contact Keith Blackley or Stewart McLeod.

He is with us now!

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Each one made a difference for Christ. All leaving behind testimonies of faith for us to follow.

As I think of this, I look at a manger scene on the mantle and a cross on the shelf. Angels, shepherds and wise men surround the manger. God sent them to accompany Jesus in his birth.

Angels, shepherds, and wise men stand beside us in hospital rooms, hospice facilities, and the pews on which we sit. They are those who offer wisdom, care, who provide compassion. God provides the faithful to be with us all the way to heaven's gates. We are never fully alone; the Spirit of God is always with us.

The true meaning of Christmas is before us. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life" (John 3:16).

Jesus came that we might have abundant life (John 10:10). He promised, "I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:3).

In Advent, Jesus arrived to be with us – He is with us now. God will never leave us nor forsake us.



When the world tells us to rush,
You tell us to be still.
When the world urges us to run,
You tell us to walk slowly.
When the world tells us to shout,
You tell us to whisper.
When the world tells us to be silent,
You provide words to proclaim.

When the world promotes division,
You call us to unity.
When the world urges us to hate,
You command us to love.
When the world feeds us despair,
You provide us a feast of hope.
When the world tells us all is ending,
You show us it has just begun.

– Len Kever, December 11, 2025

Memorials and Honorariums

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE

General Fund in Memory of

Helen Ellerbe by Judy Wood

Judy Cox, Ava Spence and Dean Temple by Joyce and Julie Nixon

Dean Temple and Jean Wheeler by the Faith Sunday School Class

Dean Temple by Gerald and Glenda Toler

Helen Ellerbe by Jim and Judy Nappier

Helen Ellerbe, Dottie Brezeale, Dean Temple and Dean Grattidge by Jiles and Kim Harrell

Helen Ellerbe, Jean Wheeler and Dean Temple by Tom and Ida Mayes

Helen Ellerbe and Dean Temple by David and Jo Earp

Helen Ellerbe, Dean Temple, Jean Wheeler and Dottie Brezeale by Andy and Gloria Pleasant

Jean Wheeler, Dean Temple and Helen Ellerbe by Carol Gilbert

Dottie Brezeale by Paula Medlin

Helen Ellerbe by John and Dolores Bagley

Dottie Brezeale, Jean Wheeler, Helen Ellerbe and Dean Temple by David and Nancy Turlington

General Fund in Honor of

Anne Abene and First Baptist Youth by David and Jo Earp

Bucky Coats, Lou Woodard and Anne Abene by Andy and Gloria Pleasant

Organ Fund in Memory of

Helen Ellerbe by Candy Pope

Jean Wheeler, Dean Temple and Helen Ellerbe by Tom, Emily and Jay Vinson

Dottie Brezeale and Helen Ellerbe by Gerald and Glenda Toler

Dean Temple and Helen Ellerbe by Joe and Linda Hester

Organ Fund in Honor of

Anne Abene and Lois Weeks by Joyce and Judy Nixon

New Beginners Club (NBC) in Memory of

Jean Wheeler by Joe and Linda Hester

North Carolina Baptist Children's Homes in Memory of

Dean Temple and Jean Wheeler by Rudy and Edwina Oliver

Lottie Moon Fund in Memory of

Dean Temple by Judy Wood

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Global Missions Fund in Memory of

Jean Wheeler by Judy Wood

Youth Fund in Memory of

Chad Lee by Fred and Texie Lee

Weekly Reports

Baptisms this Year.....	10	New Members.....	22
Worship Attendance			
Sunday, December 14.....	288	Sunday, December 7.....	174
Sunday School Attendance			
Sunday, December 14.....	121	Sunday, December 7.....	132
General Fund Giving			
Sunday, December 14.....	\$37,811	Sunday, December 7.....	\$14,589
Weekly Needs.....	\$16,659		